

**Comment of the frequency of calls of proposals
(ALMA Board agenda #3 “Operations Budget Status”)**

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I hear that there is an inclination of setting the frequency of calls for proposals to only once per year, based on cost considerations. However, I think this requires more careful thoughts.

The frequency of calls for proposals is a major parameter to set the turn-around time from writing a proposal to getting the observational results. Because ALMA is the dominant instrument in the field of millimeter and submillimeter astronomy, this turn-around time sets the speed of the research development in this field. In the era of multi-wavelength astronomy, ALMA should take an important role of stimulating observations in other wavelengths or theoretical studies, and a longer turn-around time would limit the scientific impact that ALMA can make. The turn-around time controls how fruitful scientific output of ALMA can make during its operation lifetime.

Another important aspect to consider is education. To keep the science active, we should design our system that allow ambitious young astronomers such as graduate students try their ideas. For them, shorter turn-around time is crucial, to be able to recover from a failure at the first trial or to be able to plan a follow-up observation with ALMA. A long turn-around time would make it difficult for students to rely on ALMA as the main instrument for their thesis projects.

The operations cost must fit in our budget, of course. Within this boundary, we need to optimize our plan for the sake of science. It appears that we are saving a small amount of money on cost of the big scientific output.

I would appreciate constructive discussion at the Board teleconference.